# Student Attendance Policy

| Date Approved: | 21/03/2025 |
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| Scheduled Review Date: | 8/12/2028 |
| Policy Owner: | Principal |

### 1. Context & Purpose

Parents/guardians must enroll a child of compulsory school age, 6 to 17 years of age, at a registered school and ensure their child attends school.

The College is required to record and monitor attendance and absences in order to meet the duty of care owed to students and meet the requirements of the Education Act 1990 (NSW).

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all students of compulsory school age are enrolled in and attend the College every day we are open for learning and instruction. This policy outlines our expectations for attendance and how we seek to keep absenteeism to a minimum.

### 2. Application

This policy applies to all College staff, students and parents/guardians.

### 3. Statement of Policy – Our Engagement Strategies

The College believes that attendance at the College enables students to actively participate and engage in their learning. We seek to work in partnership with parents/guardians, who are responsible for ensuring the regular attendance of their child.

Students are expected to attend the College during normal school hours every day of each term, unless there is an approved reason for not attending.

The College expects that each student will maintain, at the very least, a 95% attendance record for each year after accounting for approved absences.  A substantial breach of attendance occurs when a student fails to attend at least 75% of scheduled class days, after accounting for approved absences.

The College has a range of measures designed to positively impact attendance, including the following:

- maintain attendance records and identifying and following up unexplained absences
- marking attendance rolls as required and recording the reason given for each absence
- advise parents/guardians of unexplained absences, as soon as practicable on the same day of the absence, including for post-compulsory aged students

- encourage the development of a learning culture in which good relationships are modelled
- designing an education experience for students that is relevant, engaging and meets individual needs – as outlined in the College's Student Engagement Policy
- adopting approaches which foster the health, well-being, safety and development of resilience in students
- engage staff in professional learning which responds to changing educational and social contexts
- practices to identify 'at risk' students and provide the necessary support to maintain attendance and participation

## 4. Key Responsibilities

*Principal*

The Principal will take responsibility, through delegation, to:

- ensure College processes to manage attendance issues are developed, implemented, monitored and reviewed
- maintain current contact details for parents/guardians
- maintain an accurate student attendance register – using the College's Student Management System, which:
  - records daily attendance and absences
  - records absences using Minister approved common codes
  - records the reason for absence and supportive evidence
  - is retained for 7 years after the last entry
- provide clear information to students and parents/guardians regarding attendance requirements and the consequences of unsatisfactory attendance
- advise parents/guardians promptly when their children are absent from the College without explanation
- ensure that all cases of unsatisfactory attendance and part or full day absences from the College are investigated promptly and that appropriate intervention strategies are implemented
- ensure that staff are provided with information on attendance requirements and their obligation to monitor and promote regular attendance, including causal relief teachers when required
- provide processes for regular parent/guardian notification of individual students' attendance records
- notify parents/guardians in writing of those days when students are not required to attend the College
- ensure attendance figures are reported to the College Board on a timely basis and are available for the College Annual Report
- depending on the circumstances, establish a process for marking attendance of students where they attend a location other than their class and where their teacher is not present (examples may include Structured workplace learning)

Under current plans, all vocational curriculum will be delivered by College staff under an auspicing arrangement with the relevant registered training organisation, so College staff will have responsibility for marking attendance. Should a circumstance arise where training is planned to be delivered by a registered training organization where a College teacher or staff member is not present, the Principal must ensure, before any training takes place, that an arrangement is in place where a representative of the training organisation has a list of students, marks attendance, advises the College as soon as possible is a student is absent, and provide the attendance information to the College as soon as practicable after the training is delivered. To facilitate this process, the Principal may give the representative access to College's student management system to mark attendance.

*Teachers*

Teachers will:

- monitor attendance using the College's Student Management System, by:
  - ➢ recording daily attendance and absences
  - ➢ recording absences using Minister approved common codes
  - ➢ recording the reason for absence and supportive evidence
- ensure constancy and consistency in checking and following up on student absences

*Parents/Guardians*

Parents/Guardians are expected to:

- ensure that their children attend the College each day
- provide written permission to the relevant teacher, or the admin office, for their child, if arriving after 9.00 am and/or leaving early - this can be done through the College's student management system.
- support the College to address non-attendance
- promptly notify and explain their child's absences from the College
- maintain up to date contact details and advise the College of any changes to such details

*Students*

Students are expected to:

- attend every College day and be punctual for all classes, programs, commitments and organised activities unless they have a valid reason to be absent
- when applicable ensure that they attend structured work placements on time and advise both their teacher and the relevant employer if they will be late or unable to attend

## 5. Attendance Exemptions

A student's parents/guardians may apply to the Principal for a temporary exemption to College attendance in circumstances where they have a temporary physical or mental health matter, or a school refusal. This exemption must be supported by a report from the relevant health professional and must be reviewed periodically. A student may still access curriculum and learning materials to

continue their schooling at home as far as they are able in the circumstances.  See also the College's Assessment Policy regarding absences from school and assessments.

## 6. Student Support Plan

The College will create a "Return to School Plan" in the event that a student is absent from school for a period of time for any of the following reasons:

- School refusal
- Mental Health issue
- Surgery or other physical illness
- Any other issue which is identified by the College as requiring significant support

The "Return to School Plan" will be developed in consultation with the student, parent/guardian and a relevant health professional (if required). This plan may include strategies and an agreed approach to re-introduce a student back into the College routine in a supportive manner that has regard to the circumstances of the student.

## 7. Attendance Monitoring Procedure

The College has the following expectations and procedures to assist with student attendance:

- Students should be at the College before the scheduled starting time so that they can be organised in time for the beginning of class.  Written permission must be provided by parents/caregivers for students to arrive late or leave early, however, a teacher may exercise their discretion where a student just misses the start time with a reasonable explanation, and this is not a regular occurrence.
- Teachers will record attendance twice per day as follows:
  - ➢ at the beginning of the school day (9am), using the student management system electronic roll marking package. The times of late arrivals should be noted and details about a student's absence will also be recorded on the system.
  - ➢ After the lunch-time break.
- Notification from parents may be made via the student management system, but can also be made via telephone message, email or written note - where possible, parents/guardians are requested to advise the College of their child's absence before the school day commences through the student management system.
- Where an absence is likely to be extended beyond a single day, parents are requested to notify the College as early as possible by recording an absence through the student management system.
- The relevant teacher or the College administration officer will contact the parents/guardians of children who are absent and where an explanation has not been provided.  This will be done on the day the student is absent.
- Where a student has a consistent pattern of unexplained non-attendance and/or lateness, the College will establish and maintain communication with parents/guardians, with a view to establishing a specific plan for the student to address the reasons causing the non-attendance or lateness.

## 8. Consequences for lack of Attendance

While the College will be reasonable and attempt to support a student, a substantial breach of attendance may result in a student receiving being unable to complete subject units due to a student missing various opportunities for assessment, or because their work cannot be authenticated due to a lack of attendance.  This may lead to an outcome where a student is unable to be awarded the HSC.

In instances where the College does not have the support of parents in addressing repeated non-attendance, the Principal may discuss with parents the termination of a student enrolment.

## 9. Policy History

| Version | Policy Owner | Approval Date | Summary of Changes |
|---------|--------------|---------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Principal | 21/3/2025 | First Adopted |